contacting the liposomes bound to the substrate with the aggregate probe under conditions effective to allow attachment of the oligonucleotides on the aggregate probe to the liposomes as a result of hydrophobic interactions; and

observing a detectable change.

67. The method of Claim 66 wherein the nanoparticles in the aggregate probe are made of gold.

68. The method of Claim 66 wherein the substrate is contacted with a silver stain to produce the detectable change.

69. The method of Claim 66 wherein the substrate has a plurality of types of oligonucleotides attached to it in an array to allow for the detection of multiple portions of a single nucleic acid, the detection of multiple different nucleic acids, or both.

70. A method of detecting nucleic acid having at least two portions comprising:

providing a substrate having oligonucleotides attached thereto, the oligonucleotides having a sequence complementary to a first portion of the sequence of a nucleic acid to be detected;

providing a core probe comprising at least two types of nanoparticles, each type of nanoparticles having oligonucleotides attached thereto which are complementary to the oligonucleotides on at least one of the other types of nanoparticles, the nanoparticles of the aggregate probe being bound to each other as a result of the hybridization of the oligonucleotides attached to them;

providing a type of nanoparticles having two types of oligonucleotides attached thereto, the first type of oligonucleotides having a sequence complementary to a second portion of the sequence of said nucleic acid, the second type of oligonucleotides

having a sequence complementary to a portion of the sequence of the oligonucleotides attached to at least one of the types of nanoparticles of the core probe;

contacting said nucleic acid, the nanoparticles, the substrate and the core probe under conditions effective to allow hybridization of said nucleic acid with the oligonucleotides on the nanoparticles and with the oligonucleotides on the substrate and to allow hybridization of the oligonucleotides on the nanoparticles with the oligonucleotides on the core probe; and

observing a detectable change.

71. The method of Claim 70 wherein said nucleic acid is contacted with the substrate so that said nucleic acid hybridizes with the oligonucleotides on the substrate, and said nucleic acid bound to the substrate is then contacted with the nanoparticles so that said nucleic acid hybridizes with the oligonucleotides on the nanoparticles, and the nanoparticles bound to said nucleic acid are contacted with the core probe so that the oligonucleotides on the core probe hybridize with the oligonucleotides on the nanoparticles.

72. The method of Claim 70 wherein said nucleic acid is contacted with the nanoparticles so that said nucleic acid hybridizes with the oligonucleotides on the nanoparticles, said nucleic acid bound to the nanoparticles is then contacted with the substrate so that said nucleic acid hybridizes with the oligonucleotides on the substrate, and the nanoparticles bound to said nucleic acid are contacted with the core probe so that the oligonucleotides on the core probe hybridize with the oligonucleotides on the nanoparticles.

73. A method of detecting nucleic acid having at least two portions comprising:

providing a substrate having oligonucleotides attached thereto, the oligonucleotides having a sequence complementary to a first portion of the sequence of a nucleic acid to be detected;

providing a core probe comprising at least two types of nanoparticles, each type of nanoparticles having oligonucleotides attached thereto which are complementary to the oligonucleotides on at least one other type of nanoparticles, the nanoparticles of the aggregate probe being bound to each other as a result of the hybridization of the oligonucleotides attached to them;

providing a type of linking oligonucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to a second portion of the sequence of said nucleic acid and a sequence complementary to a portion of the sequence of the oligonucleotides attached to at least one of the types of nanoparticles of the core probe;

contacting said nucleic acid, the linking oligonucleotides, the substrate and the core probe under conditions effective to allow hybridization of said nucleic acid with the linking oligonucleotides and with the oligonucleotides on the substrate and to allow hybridization of the oligonucleotides on the linking oligonucleotides with the oligonucleotides on the core probe; and

observing a detectable change.

74. The method of any one of Claims 70-73 wherein the substrate has a plurality of types of oligonucleotides attached to it in an array to allow for the detection of multiple portions of a single nucleic acid, the detection of multiple different nucleic acids, or both.

75. The method of any one of Claims 70-73 wherein the substrate is a transparent substrate or an opaque white substrate.

76. The method of Claim 76 wherein the detectable change is the formation of dark areas on the substrate.

77. The method of any one of Claims 70-73 wherein the nanoparticles in the core probe are made of gold.